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Can We Follow Jesus In a World Like This?

BY HAROLD B. KERSCHNER

WE want to make central in our thinking the well remembered words of the Master recorded in John's Gospel: "My kingdom is not of this world." And we choose these words that they may serve as background against which to project questions which, in these days, will not stay answered: "Can we follow Jesus in a world like this?" "Have ideals any current value?" "Can we make Christianity come true?"

One of the most tragic outcomes of Europe's contemporary reign of terror is the punishment that has been visited upon the Sisters of Mercy in Germany. Nora Waln, in her book *Reaching for the Stars,* describes how, in the early thirties, when it was difficult to obtain money for carrying on their work, these sisters had made loans in the low countries, giving their word of honor that they would repay the money. This they were gradually doing, when lo, there was issued the government order forbidding the taking of funds across the border. What should they do? There was the government's order, on the one hand, and there was their word of honor, on the other! All appeals to the government having failed, they determined to run the risk involved in making the promised payments, were apprehended in the act, and given prison terms, varying from six months to six years.

What more graphically could set the issue before us? Can we follow Jesus in a world like this? Have ideals any current value? Can we make Christianity come true?

And the clue to our answer is to be found in the answer given by a noted musician, visiting in America, who was invited by his host to attend church service. He had been invited the preceding Sunday and had accepted. But when invited the second time, he replied: "I will attend church on one condition—that you will take me to hear someone who will dare me to do the

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impossible." Certain realistic facts of our present-day world do indeed seem to make the way of life that Jesus lived impossible. There is only one hope for the world, and that is that men, facing the realistic facts of life, will dare to venture the impossible.

Jesus put it this way: "My Kingdom is not of this world." When he said that he stood before Pontius Pilate, on trial for his life. His accusers charged him with sedition, claiming that he called himself a king. And Pilate, noting his gentle bearing and the absence of kingly retinue, said, half-quizzically and half-contemptuously, "Are *you* a *king?*" And Jesus answered: "I am a king; but I am not a king as other men are kings—for my kingdom is not of this world."

The temptation that has come to each generation, as it has found itself face to face with these words, is to do exactly as Pilate did: to wash our hands of them; to rob them of their true meaning by substituting the word *in* for the word *of*. We tend to whittle down these words, so that they have become to us little more than pretty poetry, elevating ritual, words set to music—as though the Kingdom of which Jesus spoke is a spiritual ideal—a very beautiful one, to be sure—but one that has no potential realization in this world. But Jesus did not so mean. He began his ministry with the affirmation: "I am come to preach glad tidings to the poor, emancipation to those who are enslaved, the opening of the eyes of the blind . . . to proclaim the coming of a year acceptable unto the Lord." And he went everywhere teaching and preaching that gospel—the dawning of a new day and the acceptance of a new way of living among men. "My kingdom *is* to be *in* this world," he said in effect, "but it is not to be *of* this world—it is *unlike* this world."

For the major method of this world is force. The kingdoms of this world are shifting sovereignties, established by conquest, and maintained by policy and cunning. It was force that Pilate had in mind when he asked of Jesus, "Art thou a king?"—he didn't want anyone to rival Rome's imperial power! And it was force that Jesus had in mind, when he replied: "I am a king, but not as kings are kings; if my kingdom were of this world then would my servants fight for me." At various times he said: "Men come into my kingdom not by might, nor by power, but *by my spirit*"; "They that make the sword their philosophy of life shall perish by the sword"; "The wrath of man will not work the righteousness of God." "I will not have forced subjects," he said in effect; "I will draw them—by the power of love." As Dr. Jowett once said: "He seeks dominion not by fighting but by lighting. . . . His servants do not go forth with swords but with lamps; not to drive people, but to lead them."

But it never occurred to Jesus that his Kingdom was to be established anywhere but on this earth. And what is more, it *must* be established here. Unless the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, we are ruined! As E. Stanley Jones has put it: "There are three world systems competing for men's allegiance today—Communism, Fascism and Christianity. Communism is totalitarianism; it demands the whole of a man. Fascism is totalitarianism; it demands the whole of a man. And Christianity is totalitarianism, too—it demands all there is of a man." The issue that squarely faces each one of us is this: "Are we helping to build the kingdoms of *this* world; or do we dare that which today seems impossible—to help build his Kingdom *in* this world?"

And now, as we bring the teachings of the Master to bear realistically upon our contemporary world situation, there are three important considerations that need everlastingly to be kept in our remembrance:

I

First: *Until this world shall make its own the working principle of Christ's Kingdom, we shall have a world like this, and conflict will be inevitable.*

This is true because the working principle of Christ's Kingdom—brotherly love—is an absolute. It is one of God's thoughts. It is an ultimate. There is nothing or beyond. It cannot be escaped. When Pilate asked Jesus about the nature of his Kingdom, he said it was the Kingdom of Truth. Words like truth, love, purity and honesty are absolutes—and whenever the absolute comes in contact with that which is partial and intermediate it is inevitable that there shall be a conflict.

Jesus, ever realistic, acknowledged the existence of the conflict in his Parable of the Sower. Truth is eternal, he said, but when it goes forth into the world it is like seed. In some instances it falls among thorns and the thorns grow up and choke it. In some instances it falls on shallow ground, where there is no depth. In some instances it falls by the wayside and doesn't even begin to grow. In other instances, however, it falls on good ground and brings forth good fruit. The true light has come into the world, and, given opportunity, it will light every man coming into the world; but if men resist truth, and prefer darkness rather than the light there is but one alternative—the conflict must go on.

The conflict must go on, for instance, so long as men persist in substituting the little god of our fathers for God our Father. What is the little god of our fathers? Exaggerated nationalism! Throughout human history nations have claimed for themselves—and properly so—the right of security. And then, for some strange reason, they have claimed for themselves—and improperly so—the right to master other peoples and to impose burdens upon them. And as Jesus noted the mounting nationalistic tendencies of his own day, he said: "If men only knew the things that make for peace—whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you do ye also unto them." And his tearful judgment as he beheld the city that he loved was: "And ye would not!" That is the truth, and the conflict will not be resolved until Christ is Lord of lords and King of kings!

And it may be that the conflict will have to go on because of certain practices within the church itself. F. W. Robertson, of Brighton, less than a century ago, began a sermon: "The Church is the Kingdom of God on earth." Well, not yet! It is the nearest thing to it.

has the highest ideals of any institution on earth. In men are more brotherly than anywhere else. But hat shall we say of the spirit of sectarianism that vides us—two thousand years of division when itedly we should have been about our Father's busi-ss! What shall we say of the church's tendency to nventionalize that which originally was simple and ontaneous? And that is what Christianity was origin-ly—a spirit, involving a new relationship of man with od and of man with man, and setting out to proclaim new heaven and a new earth. What shall we say of r own personal ingenious attempts to make Chris-nity comfortable and easy? It certainly is our task

Photo by Bachrach

HAROLD B. KERSCHNER

o see that the Church *is* the Kingdom of God on arth; but we need constantly to be on our guard so hat the world we are commissioned to overcome does ot overcome us.

Not many years ago, physicians throughout the orld celebrated the anniversary of the death of homas Linacre, founder of the Royal College of hysicians, and of famous lectureships at Oxford and ambridge. When he was sixty years of age, he de-ded to give up medicine, and become a clergyman; nd, taking up the study of divinity in 1520, he ap-lied himself to the New Testament. When he had ead carefully the fifth, sixth and seventh chapters of Matthew, he laid down the book, saying that either his was not the gospel or we are not Christians. The fth, sixth and seventh chapters of Matthew are the ospel. We are not Christians! And we need to re-nember that until this world shall make its own the orking principle of Christ's Kingdom, we shall have world like this, and the conflict will go on.

II

In the second place, we need to remember that whatever policies and expedients men and nations may temporarily adopt, they always have to return to the working principle of the Kingdom of God when they want to build anything that will last. In the long run, love never faileth.

To be sure, for the moment, love often does fail. We have all seen it fail to win those upon whom it was bestowed. It is having a desperate time today. Indeed it would be next to impossible for men to go out into the world, either as individuals or as nations, and live free and independent lives on the basis of voluntary good will. Il Duce, in his address celebrating the 20th anniversary of Fascism, said: "We desire no more talk of brotherhood, sisterhood, cousinship or other similar relationship. . . . Relations between states are those of strength. Woe to the helpless! If the democracies weep because of the end of Czechoslovakia, that is excellent reason for us not to associate ourselves with their more or less indecent tears. . . . The password is this: more cannons, more ships, more airplanes at any cost!"

So long as any man anywhere in this world believes that, love cannot perform its perfect work and social restraints will be inevitable. Until men throughout the world shall discover and believe that the way of the ungodly shall perish, and shall accept for themselves the higher law of love, our social security will have to rest back, at least in part, upon governments and laws, courts and prisons, armies and navies. Kierkegaard, the Scandinavian writer, has well said: "A minister who preaches the love commandment without also revealing how desperately difficult, if not impossible, it is to love one's neighbor, proves that he has never taken the commandment seriously or sought to apply it to his own life." That is not a pleasant fact to contemplate, but, dealing with our world realistically, it is necessary to declare all the facts.

But having declared all the facts and having granted that force is sometimes a necessity in our world at its present stage of development, it is still true that when we want to build anything that will last we always have to come back to brotherly love. Force restrains, but it never releases. It tears down, but it doesn't build. It destroys, but it doesn't create. Until our century, I suppose that no man ever had more massed force at his command than Napoleon Bonaparte, yet it was when he was at the height of his power that he made the classic remark: "Do you know what amazes me more than all else? The impotence of force to organize anything! There are only two powers in the world: the spirit and the sword. In the long run the sword will always be conquered by the spirit." That is everlasting truth, the same yesterday, today and forever.

There is a tradition among us that there was present at the crucifixion a soldier, who, as he surveyed the wondrous cross on which the Prince of Glory died, beat upon his breast and said: "This was a righteous man, the very Son of God himself!" Why did he beat upon his breast? It was a gesture of despair. "What a

world!" he seemed to say; "Here was Truth, and now see what has come of it! Mighty Rome hath spoken, and now he is no more!" But he was wrong. Mighty Rome is no more; but that Truth, for a moment crushed to earth, goes marching on!

O where are kings and empires now
Of old that went and came?
But, Lord, Thy Church is praying still
A thousand years the same!

III

And now once more and in a really personal sense, what I fear for us all is a very insidious thing—that, being impressed by the realism of the situation—by the fact that the conflict in our day will be interminable—*we shall give up the ideal, that we shall not dare the relatively impossible, that we shall be tempted to yield to the pressure of this world.*

It was the same cynical temptation that came to Jesus: Why take such a hard way? Why go up to Jerusalem? Why go through Gethsemane? Why take sin so much to heart? Why don't you become a king? And again and again, he answered: "Thou shalt not tempt God! Whatsoever is sown in this world, that will be reaped. What profit shall it be if a man gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

What a tragic recollection we have of that young man who came to Jesus to know more about his Kingdom! "Whatever it is," he said to Jesus, "you have the right solution!" And when Jesus told him what it was, he went away sorrowing. His kingdom—and it was vast—was *of* this world!

What an inspiring recollection we have of Bunyan, who, fully aware of the difficulties of the spiritual life, said: "I have looked this whole thing in the face; and, cost me what it may, I mean to have Christ-likeness and will." Of Kagawa, who, after the Japanese invasion of Manchuria, visited China, expressing to Chinese Christians the anxiety felt by Christians in Japan because of the non-Christian policies of certain authorities in the Japanese government. Of Peter and John, who, when commanded by the authorities of their day to speak no more in the Name of Christ, said: "Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye, for we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." These noble souls were *in* this world, but they were not *of* it.

There is an enchanting story called "The Wonderful Window," which tells of a London clerk of brighter days, but nonetheless called to spend his days in dark and depressing surroundings, who procured a mysterious Oriental window, and had it installed high in his office workshop. Through this window he saw no more the sunless streets and the anxious faces so long familiar to his gaze; but he saw instead a city of high towers, of green treetops and great skyways. And on the highest tower there was a banner with a sturdy knight pictured upon it, protecting the city from the destructive forces that threatened to undermine it. This wonderful window put a halo of glory about his life. As he added the long columns of figures and tried to make them balance—as he added up the facts of li and tried to make them balance—he came to feel th he was working with that knight upon the tower. H work was to help the knight keep the city beautiful ar happy and spiritually strong. He was living *in* th world, but he was not part *of* it. Hemmed in by forc and influences that make up the kingdoms of th world, his soul was free—he was helping to build th City of God among men.

An abiding, sustaining experience like that is need by each one of us as we face the realities of our wor today, and dare to do the impossible. It is not easy follow Jesus in a world like this, but it is a lot easi than to try to follow anyone else! There is no oth name given among men whereby we may be saved. his Name, the conflict must go on! O God, to us m grace be given to follow in his train!

God Cares Beyond Our Deserving

By Howard J. Conn

I am found of them that sought me not. Isaiah 65:

IT is in the darkness that light shines with its mo telling effect. It is from confusion that ord often emerges. It is through doubts that people fr quently find certainty. It is to the lost that a messa of salvation comes with greatest force.

Surely in these trying days all of us have know moments when we have been overwhelmed with t sense of darkness, confusion, doubt and hopelessne Yet it is at just such moments that the Christian gosp comes with the assurance that not these darker expect tions but light, order, certainty and salvation are t ultimate destiny of man. God cares for us beyond o deserving! God cares for us beyond our expectatio There is what I would call the amazing contrariety God's love, the fact that his rich blessings are pour out on a world that so little deserves them, and th his redeeming love comes to a people who would othe wise be lost. Isaiah said that it was the people wl sit in darkness that have seen a great light; John te us that the Word of God shineth in the darkness, a Jesus himself said that he had come to save that whi is lost.

As I have read my Bible this past year I have be impressed with the number of passages which sugge these contrasts and give the promise of God's guidan at those times when we are going astray. The Lo spoke through Isaiah to say, "I am found of them th sought me not." When people have turned their bac on God, when they have sought to live in their ov self-sufficiency, when, like the prodigal son, they ha rebelled against the father and have gone to live in far country, even then God has come to them in t midst of their poverty and distress, for "I am fou of them that sought me not." Peter wrote to the ear Christians that whereas they had previously been

scattered, divided, puzzled and perplexed people, they had through the mercy of God been united into the holy fellowship of the church. He described them as "you who in times past were not a people, but are now the people of God; who had not obtained mercy, but now have been shown mercy." This contrast of blessings beyond deserving is expressed in its most striking form in those words which Paul wrote in his letter to the Romans, "But God commendeth his love toward us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us."

The Christian gospel is the good news of promised salvation through the love of God who cares beyond all human deserving. This is the foundation of our Christian faith which we carry before us as a shield in our day-by-day living, a shield which, I would suggest this morning, has two sides: on the one side, the love of God toward us; and on the other, our response to God.

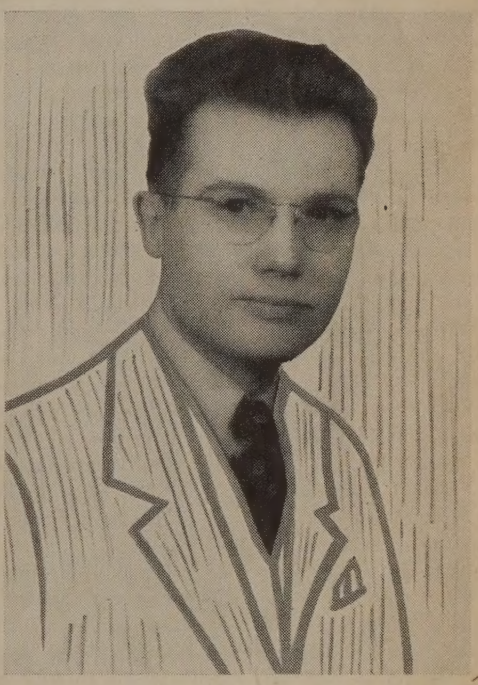
I

The first and primary side of the shield of Christian faith is the love of God for us. The Negroes through their folklore and song are able to suggest more vividly than most of us this love of God which reaches down to frail human creatures. There has been on Broadway recently a Negro musical the first scene of which shows a Negro lying critically ill in a sick room. Little Joe Jackson has not been a good man. He has fallen before those weaknesses which we commonly associate with his people. He has loved to gamble, he has been lazy, and he has been faithless. Into the sick room come Lucifer Junior and his Cohorts dressed in red to claim the soul of Little Joe for their amusement and his eternal torment. From the other side of the stage enter the Lord's Henchmen dressed in white to contend with Lucifer Junior for the soul of Little Joe. God has sent them not because Little Joe deserves to be saved, but because God in his infinite mercy has looked with compassion upon this mortal soul and wishes to give him another chance to be worthy of a cabin in the sky.

This simple but dramatic scene suggests the love of God who cares beyond all our deserving, a love which all of us have experienced in our own lives. We know how many are the blessings that have been granted to us.

To be sure, we have problems to overcome, difficulties to solve, disappointments to face; life is not always easy. Yet despite these problems we realize how great has been God's concern for us. If your experience is at all like mine, you can remember the many times when you said the stupid thing and did the foolish act, when you were hasty but should have been more considerate, when you passed by hurriedly in the face of another's need, when you failed to show the sympathy and the understanding that would have cheered a friend, and when you forgot to forgive as you would want to be forgiven. Yes, we have sinned in many ways and on many occasions. Punished though we may have been, God has not dealt with us according to the measure of our inquities. He has blessed us beyond our deserving.

It is not only in regard to personal problems and the future life that the redemptive love of God applies, but also to the sweep of history. If we believed that the story of civilization were nothing but the evidence of man's self-sufficient efforts, we might agree with the skeptic who said that all history is the record of the blind leading the blind. We know, however, that the slow but gradual development of the human race toward the divine ideal reveals more than the blindness of man; the hand of God has also been operating in the midst of history. Beyond the blindness of man has



HOWARD J. CONN

been the guidance of God. In Isaiah we are given the promise: "and I will bring the blind by a way they knew not: I will lead them in paths that they have not known; I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight."

God was in history guiding Moses who though expelled from Egypt returned to lead his people out of bondage and through the wilderness wanderings which they without him would not have understood. God was guiding history through the prophets, through men like Isaiah whose counsels did not prevail among their contemporaries but who bound up their testimony among a small group of disciples who were to be the saving remnant of Israel and the foundation of the civilization on which you and I are now building. God was in history guiding Martin Luther who liberated people from bondage to an institution which had grown topheavy and made it possible for them to worship God in the freedom of their own souls. God was in Abraham Lincoln as a spirit of compassion and tenderness

guiding this country through one of the difficult hours of its history. And it is our Christian conviction that God still moves in history and that in this dark time he will bring forth leaders who will guide us into peace and righteousness.

Above all, God was in Christ Jesus our Lord giving to man a revelation of life's highest way. In Jesus we see the light of the perfect way that shines through our blindness and selfishness. What Jesus can mean as the guide to human life is suggested by a beautiful passage from Scholem Asch's great novel, *The Nazarene,* in which Peter is brought before a group of learned rabbis to explain just who is this man from Nazareth whom he has been following. Peter says to these aristocratic and learned rabbis: "Ye have divided God's law into a thousand parts; who shall gather them up and hold them in his hand, save the learned who are occupied therewith day and night? For us, the unlettered and heavy-laden, God's word is closed with many seals. We know not that which is permitted and that which is not permitted. We wander lost in darkness, we beat our bodies like blind men against the walls without number which ye have put up about our father in heaven. But our hearts, too, search the thread which leadeth to God, our souls long to be bound to him, to find the way to the throne of his glory . . . and we have worn out our eyes looking for him that will come. (Then one day in the fishing port) I beheld this man from my boat, as he stood among the poor folk, and I heard him as he called: 'Come unto me, all ye that are heavy-laden.' . . . Since that time I have followed him. And I know not who he is. But he is the light in our darkness, the word for us that are dumb, the guide for us forlorn and abandoned ones."

No, history is not the record of the blind leading the blind but the story of God's love guiding his people by prophets, saints and martyrs, guiding them by our Lord Jesus Christ, guiding them despite their sins, despite their failures, despite their rebellions, and guiding them beyond their deserts and expectations. The first side of the shield of Christian faith is God's love toward us.

II

The other side of that shield is the response of man toward God. This cannot be expressed more simply than in the words of John, "Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought to love one another." The experience of Christian living has always borne testimony to the truth that "We love, because he first loved us." The highest aspirations of the human soul have come not out of our primary initiative but in response to the Divine Presence beyond. The moments when we have lived at our highest stretch have come not from our self-sufficiency but in response to the measureless love of God which beckons us on. Many a young person has determined to live better because of the sacrifice and love of his parents. Many an individual has been inspired to nobler effort because of the example of another who has taken an interest in him. Many a person has become more understanding and compassionate because of the consideration which an enemy has shown toward him. So it is that the best in man is but response to the love of God.

It is important that we consider the basic truths Christian faith and the fundamental doctrines of t church. The value that comes from such studies, ho ever, is the determination on our part to live bett lives because of the riches of our heritage. The fin test of a great sermon or a great service of worship not its beauty or its popularity but its power to chan the lives of people. Are people inspired to go out live more decently, more sacrificially and more loving because they have heard that sermon or attended th service? That is the test. The degree of our respon to the love of God is the measure of our appreciati of that love.

Peter, writing to the early Christians in the passa already mentioned, said: "Ye who in times past we not a people but now are God's people, who had n obtained mercy but now have been shown mercy, are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy n tion. I beseech you, that as he who hath called you holy, so be ye holy in all manner of living."

The most pathetic contrast in our gospel is that e pressed by Jesus as he wept over the city of Jerusale "O Jerusalem, if thou hadst known the things that h belonged to thy peace . . . How oft I would . . . b ye would not . . ." Rather, we want him to say of u "How oft I would . . . and ye were willing also—ho often I would show you deeper understanding, and y were willing to listen. How oft I would show y richer appreciation, and you were eager to learn. Ho oft I would teach you greater concern for the needs others, and you were willing. How oft I would sho you deeper sympathy for the unloved, and ye were wi ing to respond. How oft I would show you grea tolerance for those who disagree with you, and ye we patient. How oft I would show you what it means forgive those who have wronged you, and ye we willing to forgive. How oft I would lead you in t disciplines of Christian living, and ye were willing follow. How oft I would . . . and ye would too!"

These, then, are the two sides of the shield of Chr tian faith: first and foremost, the love of God towa us; and secondly, our response toward God in obedi and faithful living.

On a winter night we were at Longfellow's Ways Inn at Sudbury where Henry Ford has just construct a lovely little Mary-Martha Chapel of simple colon design. The church stands on the crest of an open h and powerful floodlights at the foot of the slope w trained on the white structure. In the midst of t darkness of the winter night it was an awe-inspiri sight to see that hilltop church with its white colun and slender spire reaching up into the surroundi blackness.

Just so, in the dark night of confusion and p plexity in which we so often find ourselves the love God stands in shining glory like that hilltop chur the promise of a love and transfiguration; and in sponse to that hope our hearts are opened in adorati in obedience, and in faithfulness.

Why Life is Sometimes Flat

By Charles Joseph Wood

Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not. Genesis 28:16.

SINCE my high school days, I have been interested in the study of dimensions and their possibilities. Indeed, all of us are made conscious daily of at least two dimensions: length and breadth. And who can possibly live in this particular section, and not marvel at the extent of these dimensions? We speak of the length and breadth of our prairies.

But many of us know something about a third dimension—height. This preacher will yield to none in his interest in, and love for, the prairies, for to the observant eye they yield abundant fascination and discovery. But just the same, after traveling all day on the flat prairie, it is a relief to lift one's eyes to the hills, to climb above the prairie, to live also in the third dimension, height. And so we have lived and moved and had our being in three dimensions: length, breadth and height.

But scientists began to observe certain equations which needed another dimension for explanation. They began to think in terms of a fourth dimension in space beyond the dimensions in which they moved. So they called it the *n*th or fourth dimension. We are sure of three dimensions, and it is possible that there is a fourth dimension and perhaps a fifth, sixth and seventh. So men began to think in terms of a fourth dimension, to imagine what it was like, and to give us stories about it. I confess that these stories of the fourth dimension have always interested me.

HOW MAKE LIFE INTERESTING?

Now the practical interest behind this fact of the fourth dimension is that the more dimensions in which life is lived, the more interesting it is. For example, we all know what the mountains can do for one who has known only the monontony of life on the prairies. Now if a third dimension can do that for life, what would life become if we could add a fourth or a fifth dimension? You see, it is a fact that the more dimensions we get into life, the more interesting it becomes. And contrariwise, the dull, flat life is the life lived out of just one or two dimensions.

That is true not only of geography, but also of the quality of life. For example, think of Methuselah. What do you really know about him? Just that he lived for 969 years. That is absolutely all. Surely he lived in the dimension of length. But, on the other hand, take the life of Jesus. He lived little in the dimension of length—barely 33 years as against 969 years. But see how he lived in the dimension of height! Indeed, one man says of him, that if all the acts he performed had been written down, the world itself would not be able to contain the books required. That is what happens to a life when it adds the dimension of height to its dimensions of length and breadth. After all, something can be said in favor of getting the dimension of height into life.

Most of us know something about the length and breadth of things: we live there daily, buy and sell there daily, build our houses and business there, and traffic there daily. But few of us know much about this third dimension of life—height. And when we move over into the fourth dimension, still more of us give it up. Anyway, we seem to get along in the first and second dimensions. Why talk of a third dimension, height? And what practical value could there be to a fourth, or fifth dimension?

Well, just this: some of us are beginning to wonder if the joy, the freshness, the thrill of living haven't given place to a listless, flat, indifferent attitude to life simply because we are content to live a life bounded by one or two dimensions.

The plea of this sermon is simply this: get out of two-dimensional living! Somehow find out what a third and a fourth dimension can do for you.

TWO-DIMENSIONAL LITERATURE

This whole matter of dimensions, to keep life from going stale upon our hands, was suggested to me by a book I read recently. The story was interesting enough, the people were real enough. But as I finished the book, I was conscious of a deep disappointment. The author promised great things, but somehow failed to inspire me. Thinking about the books, suddenly the reason for my disappointment flashed through my mind: the people in that book, though real enough, lived in but two dimensions—length and breadth. There was not a suggestion of mountains, stars, aspirations. It dealt only with the hard surface of life. Plenty of length and breadth, but no height.

If you are interested in making an experiment, move through the pages of modern biography and fiction. I have heard many of you say, "I can't find a book worth reading, and most of them are just trash." Well, what is the cause of this? Is it not because the authors themselves are living in a world of but two dimensions? They cannot imagine a third or fourth dimension to life. Consequently, they cannot produce characters who live in a world higher than one of just two dimensions. That is why we are disappointed. That is why we look for stars, mountains, loftiness in modern literature—and look in vain. You see, whether we sense it or not, it takes the third dimension, and beyond, to put value, meaning and interest into life. Without these extra dimensions, life goes flat, stale upon our hands.

Or if you wish to carry that experiment into life beyond the covers of a book, move out to your daily experiences. Recall a person whose life seems to influence you the least. He is a good fellow, a good neighbor, a good citizen, a good father. But somehow he fails to bring out the best in you, fails to make you conscious of lofty heights, the stars and sky. Well, when you sum up that life, you will discover that its negative influence is due to the fact that it is lived in but two dimensions: long enough, broad enough, but

not high enough. On the other hand, recall the life that somehow stirs you, inspires you, makes you think of finer things, causes you to look for the clouds, the skies, the mountains. What is the secret of its uplift? Why, it's the life with the third dimension added to it.

There is a curious little fable about a wild duck used to flying high and far. One evening he alighted in a barnyard with some tame ducks. He ate their corn and liked it. He lived in the barnyard day after day. Suddenly his former companions flew over his head calling to him to be up and away. He spread his wings to answer the urge within. He flew as high as the roof of the barn, then fell to earth again. He had

CHARLES JOSEPH WOOD

grown too fat upon the farmer's corn. Again his companions flew overhead and called to him. The urge within to be away with them was weaker now. Finally, he felt no urge at all when they called to him from the heights.

A fable? Yes; but also a true story of a life built for three dimensions. Live only in two dimensions, and the time will come when the call to live in the heights will fall upon deadened ears. The ability to respond will be atrophied. Look at the lives about you, and see the truth of this matter.

JACOB'S MARVELOUS DISCOVERY

Our scripture lesson this morning grips us because it reveals what happens to a man when suddenly he discovers that life has a third dimension. This man was tricky and lived by his wits. He added to the length and breadth of his life by tricking his brother out of the family inheritance. He was a business man, and a successful business man, if profits were the o consideration. But he lived in only two dimensio He knew nothing of the third dimension—height.

But see where this living in only two dimensi finally brought him. Hunted, fearing for his l bothered by a burning conscience, we see him, fina alone in a desolate spot with nowhere to lay his h but upon a hard stone. But even so, in such a pla and to such a man, is revealed the fact of anot dimension to life, namely, height. In a vision, hea opens, a ladder is let down to the very stone on wh his head is resting, and angels go up and down t ladder.

And that discovery of a third dimension to revolutionizes the life of Jacob. Indeed, it is a gr moment in any life when it starts to live in the heig as well as in the length and breadth of the plains.

Now we ought to ponder that scene thoughtfu for I have a feeling that this desire for the third dim sion lives in every soul. The trouble is that, like wild duck, we grow so used to living in but two dim sions that soon or late the third dimension loses importance for us. And living entirely upon the pla will cause any life to go flat.

The story goes that a teacher was trying to impr her children with the marvelous growth of science a invention. So she asked the question: "What is h today, and is important, that was not here fifty ye ago?" Quick as a flash a bright little girl repli "Me! teacher, me!"

THE WORTH OF THE INDIVIDUAL

And the little girl was right. The most import miracle in the universe is the individual. God worked through countless ages and has stored the u verse with tremendous resources out of which rich a divine personalities might be developed. But see h we take life at such a cost and with such possibilit and crowd it down into two dimensions. That is w life goes flat upon our hands. Built to soar throu the higher atmospheres, we wind up so often in so barnyard, like the wild duck. Unable to get off ground! Bounded only by the length and brea of things!

Face this modern world, and note that this living but two dimensions is a serious matter. Hitler, Mus lini, Stalin live in but two dimensions: length of c quest, and breadth of power. See what a hell they making of life upon the earth! Living in a two-dim sional world always does that—it brings hate, suspici greed, lust, war. The only antidote seems to be discovery of this third dimension to life, and the lad stretching from earth to heaven.

How momentous this service would be this morni if someone here discovered this third dimension to life. And more than that: many here this morni ought to discover that third dimension to life. Mo over, it is a personal matter. It is not dependent up the outcome of the war in Europe. The war in Eur came because too many of us have been content w the length and breadth of life. Then start out t

morning, I beg of you, to discover this third dimension and help to remake the world.

But how can we, as individuals, discover this third dimension?

THINK GREAT THOUGHTS

In the first place, we can begin by thinking greater thoughts. For we may be assured that the third dimension takes greater thinking than do the other two dimensions.

Two babies were parked near each other, so the story goes, while their nurses talked. One baby leaned out of his carriage and said to the other: "Hey, fellow! Did you hear that Anaconda went up two points today?" Well, the third dimension takes higher thinking than that devoted to stock market quotations in which so many of us were trained at an early age.

It is a strange fact, but true: you seat one man at a desk, and immediately he builds four walls about it, and makes a prison out of it. Give some men a dollar, and they make a prison out of their souls for it. On the other hand, put some men in a real prison, and like Judson, Bunyan and a host of other great souls, they tear down the walls and soar to the highest heaven. And the reason? Some live in a two-dimensional world; others think high thoughts, and add height to their world. And the difference? Flat living is over against living in the heights.

We need to do some higher thinking about this universe and our personal relationship to it. What is it all about? Did it come by chance, or is there a God and a divine purpose back of it? Then if the universe, as Eddington says, is a noble thought, we need not fear the outcome of the terrible things being enacted in the world today. Once I raise my thoughts to this level, I begin to think God's thoughts after him. And that does something to my individual life. You see, only men who think to the heart of things do not fear what happens on the surface of things. Such thinking does add the third dimension to life. It erects ladders to the skies.

We need to do some higher thinking about our daily experiences. Think back into your experiences of this past week, and be honest about it. How many of your thoughts could be called great thoughts? Did you think about anything higher than your job, the war, whether stocks were going up or down, your social appointments? To be sure, these thoughts are essential; but should they exhaust our thinking?

MAKING A LIVING OR A LIFE?

And your experiences? Are they just to make a living, or to make a life? You see, great living comes out of a conviction that things happen to us for a purpose, that we serve an eternal purpose through what we do. Has your thinking reached this height? When it does, it will make you conscious of the third dimension to life. You see, we get lost in things, and lose their deeper meanings. They deal with the third dimension without which life is flat.

We need to do some thinking about religion, for this third dimension is the concern of religion. We often speak about the current indifference to religion. Well, there are some things which pass as religion, to which I am glad to be indifferent. There is a formal, exterior, hypocritical church-going form of religion which is worse than no religion at all. It insists that its creed is right; all other standards are wrong. It strains at a gnat and swallows a camel. It sees a splinter of wrong-doing in another's eyes, but does not notice the whole beam of hypocrisy in its own eyes. It thinks little thoughts, and ends in smug, self-righteous, complacent lives. I beg of you do not take that for religion! There is a religion which is a profound philosophy of life. It remakes life, and causes it to be lived from great heights. It makes life noble, kind, sincere, helpful, sympathetic, to live from lofty peaks. It is Christlike, and has his mind and spirit. I beg of you: take that for your religion. Only that is worthy of the name of religion. And seeing religion in this fashion as a way to finer living will add the third dimension to life. That is the only kind of religion worth bothering about.

But, again: not only does great thinking about these essential matters of life lift us up until we are aware of the third dimension to life, but a consciousness of belonging to something bigger than our individual life will discover the third dimension for us.

I said a moment ago that we need to think more highly of the self, to see the importance of our life. But we must also see that we realize our fullest importance and signficance only as we belong to something bigger than we are.

A woman pointed to the picture of her late husband. "Two hundred pounds," she said to me. Well, I saw his features, knew his weight, but still had no idea of his importance. You see, we are valuable, we become important only because of things to which we belong, with which we are connected.

THE HORIZON OF HUMANITY

When the telephone connection was arranged between New York and San Francisco, the operators along the line were told that if they failed in their connections when the conversation was to start between these two points, they would lose their jobs. To the dismay of one, the discovery was made that there was a break somewhere along his section of the line. Frantically, he arranged for another connection down through Pittsburgh, across Pennsylvania, and back to the main line again. And when the conversation started, his connection was perfect.

Proving your worth to some tremendous undertaking, having a part in such an enterprise adds significance and value to the individual.

Then move out and consider the great enterprises of earth: peace instead of war, justice instead of injustice, right instead of wrong, love instead of hatred, the church, God—when a man links up his life with these, his life takes on a significance which it could never have if it thinks only of its own interests and concerns. Losing self in some cosmic cause is the surest

way to discover the third dimension—it sets up ladders from heaven to earth.

Finally, we discover the third dimension in life when we begin sharing our best with others.

Mrs. Lindbergh tells of a lonely airplane trip which she took with her famous husband. For hours she received no response to her radio calls. Beneath were the endless stretches of water. Finally, they sighted a tramp steamer on the horizon. "I cannot put into words," Mrs. Lindbergh said, "our feeling when we saw that steamer. It made us feel that we were in touch with other lives again."

Just so! No life can be happy, great and satisfied, when it is out of touch with other lives. It is a dreary stretch when one never meets another life and bestows upon it the best one has. To lose one's life in a real service to another, is to set up a ladder in that life to heaven, and the thrill of the experience will reveal the angels going up and down.

THE TEST OF A GREAT LIFE

A poor Scotch woman asked Henry Drummond if he would come and see her husband before he died. "Oh sir," she said, "he's dying. He can't speak to you, and he cannot hear you speak to him. But I want him to catch a breath of you before he dies."

"A breath of you before he dies!" Suppose someone wants us like that? Could anything finer be said of a life? And if you share your best as you go along, like the fragrance of a rose, it will give a breath of heaven to some needy soul. It will discover to him and to you the third dimension of life.

Then gather up these three facts: thinking great thoughts, belonging to something bigger than the self, sharing your best with another. What will these three facts do for life? They will lift life—your life—out of a two-dimensional experience, and put the third dimension into it. That, indeed, will set up ladders from earth to heaven.

To be sure, we may lie down with stones for pillows, but when this third dimension becomes a reality, we are able to say: "Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not." It is the third dimension in life that discovers this tremendous fact. And that discovery transforms life from a flat, stale experience to a consciousness of something thrilling about our existence. It keeps us on tiptoe to live.

The Thing That Matters

THE ONLY THING that really matters is the individual, not society. Society will be what the individual is. It will be great gain if you bow before the greatness, the glory, the power and holiness of manhood. Take America into the preview of your religious ideals, and come back to the simple things of life, to what you have learned at your mother's knee, and to trustfulness. Your religion should be an exaltation of the ideals that ferment in you until you come up more and more into the likeness of the perfect man.

ZE BARNEY PHILLIPS.

What It Means to Be Christian

BY WILLIAM R. BARNHART

What do ye more than others, do not even pagans the same? Matthew 5:47.

HOW should Christians differ from non-Christians? Jesus answers, "If man would be disciple let him deny himself and take up his cross follow me." "I have given you an example."

Real religion means translating God into mod life. As Ernest Fremont Tittle says, "Religion divor from civilization goes to seed; civilization divor from religion goes to hell." What does it mean follow Christ today? It means to apply at l three fundamental truths revealed by Christ.

I

First, every personality is a child of God, a brot of Christ, our brother, and of infinitely priceless va Jesus taught that at a time when life was considere be cheap. At a time when infanticide was practi along the Mediterreanean coast Jesus declared, " spise not one of these little ones." At a time w gladiatorial combats were popular and several hund slaves had been crucified along the Appian Way, J taught the parables of the Lost Sheep, the Lost C the Prodigal or Lost Son, and stated that "the Son Man is come to seek and to save that which is lost.

There are three main ways of judging people. F by what they have; second, by what they are; th by what they can become. We frequently confuse w a man has with what he is. However, Jesus tau that we should judge people neither by what they h nor by what they are, but by what they can beco We are to judge people by their potential capaci Jesus believed that no matter how low a man fallen in society, he possessed at least a spark of divi that could be developed until—and this is perhaps most amazing thing Jesus ever said—he could bec perfect even as God is perfect. If people could unfolded before them their possibilities for perso development, it would be the most thrilling and spiring experience of their lives. They would n have inferiority complexes.

What would we do for the forty millions of countrymen who are living on a subnormal leve life if we really believed that each one is a chil God, a brother of Christ, our brother, and of infini priceless value? What would we do for their chil if we really believed that they belong to the famil God, to our family, and that each one is of inestim value? What would we do for the three million yo people between the ages of sixteen and twenty-f who are out of school and out of work? Recent interviewed for a college teaching position a young who had a Phi Beta Kappa key and a Ph.D. from of our leading universities. He had excellent rec mendations showing that he was a good teacher

research scholar. When I interviewed him he was driving a taxicab and earning about ten dollars per week. There is something drastically wrong with a civilization, which is perishing from a lack of intelligence, when it cannot make use of the little intelligence that it is producing, when it has doctors of philosophy with Phi Beta Kappa keys driving taxicabs in our city streets.

I am not one of those who believe that the difficulty is due to the fast way our schools and colleges turn out more educated young people than we need. From a Christian viewpoint, if we really tried to build a Kingdom of God on earth there would be enough work to be done to keep everyone working full time and overtime for generations to come. Before we blame young people for their lack of morality, we need to understand what happens to those who cannot find a position or a purpose in life. An increasing number of them will believe that it is well to "eat, drink and be merry for tomorrow we die"—and what difference does it make whether we live or die? A young college graduate said at a recent conference: "I seem to be a nuisance now as I go about looking for jobs that do not exist, but when war comes, then I'll become important. Then I'll be sought after to be gun-fodder."

What would our international policy be if we really believed that every German, every Russian and every Japanese is a child of God, a brother of Christ, our brother, and of infinitely priceless value? We need to think through the ethical implications of what it means to pray "Our Father." What would our attitude be toward race prejudice and capital punishment if we believed in this fundamental truth revealed by Christ? "What do ye more than others, do not even the pagans the same?"

This age is marked by the decline of the individual. The rise of fascism, nationalism, communism and materialism is producing this decline. The individual rose to importance during the past few centuries because of four great movements. The Renaissance liberated man's mind and made him a free thinking being. The Reformation emancipated him from religious dogma and gave him religious liberty. The American and French Revolutions upheld the inalienable rights of man over against the rights of the State and gave him political freedom. The Industrial Revolution increased his economic liberty in contrast to feudalism.

Nationalism and materialism are today making man small. They are taking away the inalienable rights of man that he so valiantly fought through the ages to obtain. We are hearing a great deal about the loyalty of the people to the government. We, also, must demand loyalty of the government to the people. We must proclaim that every man is created in the image of God and should have the opportunity to develop his divine nature to the utmost.

Nicholas Berdyaev, in his book *The Fate of Man in the Modern World,* profoundly analyzes the dehumanization of man by the forces of modern civilization—the state, communism, capitalism, racialism and the machine. He believes that the process of degeneration may go in two directions—toward animalism and toward "machinism." Man desiring no longer to be the image of God becomes the image of the machine.

Dechristianization led to dehumanization and this is leading to insanity. Man has lost his spiritual and mental balance. We need a moral and spiritual revolution—a revolution in the name of human personality that will place the value of man above the idols of the machine, the state, the race, the collective.

The Kingdom of God will be a form of democracy in which everyone will have an opportunity to develop his creative capacities to the maximum. As Thomas Mann says, "Democracy is the political name for the ideals which Christianity brought into the world as religion." When Christianity is discarded, democracy disappears. Take away the Christian doctrine that man is made in the image of God and there remains no reason why man should not be made a slave of the State. Democracy will not advance unless we recover our faith in man, and we cannot recover our faith in man unless we recover faith in God. "What do ye more than others, do not even the pagans the same?"

II

What does it mean to be a Christian? It means secondly, as Jesus says: "This is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you." Love and service naturally follow the first belief. The Parables of the Lost, which are called the gospel within the gospel, because they are the heart of the gospel, reveal the redeeming love of God. Jesus believed that if we love a person to the degree that we are willing to sacrifice our life for him, his divine nature will respond. He believed that such sacrificial love is irresistible. That is the meaning of the cross.

The family is the only unit in society which is based on the ethics of Christian brotherhood. It is the only realm where it is true that the greatest is the greatest servant of all, the last is first; where we go the second mile; where we forgive not seven times seven but seventy times seven; where we find our life by losing it. Jesus' aim was to extend the ethics of the family to include the whole of society as the one family of God. But when we pass beyond the family group, we pass from the love ethics of Jesus, which is an absolute ethics, demanding absolute love, to the relative ethics of Aristotle, to the ethics of the Golden Mean, as expressed over the statue at Delphi, "nothing too much"—forgive a few times but not seventy times seven; give a little, but not too much.

The Kingdom of God will not result from changing only our social system. A poor play with poor actors will not become a good play merely by shifting the scenery. The actors need to be improved. Although we need to perfect our system of highways, a perfect system of highways will not prevent reckless and drunken drivers from having accidents. In fact, before we construct a new social order we should know the type of people who will inhabit it. An architect wants to know that before he builds a house. If dogs are

going to live in it, he will construct a dog house. If criminals are going to live in it, he will build a penitentiary. If insane men and women are going to dwell in it, he will construct an insane asylum. We need to change individuals as well as society.

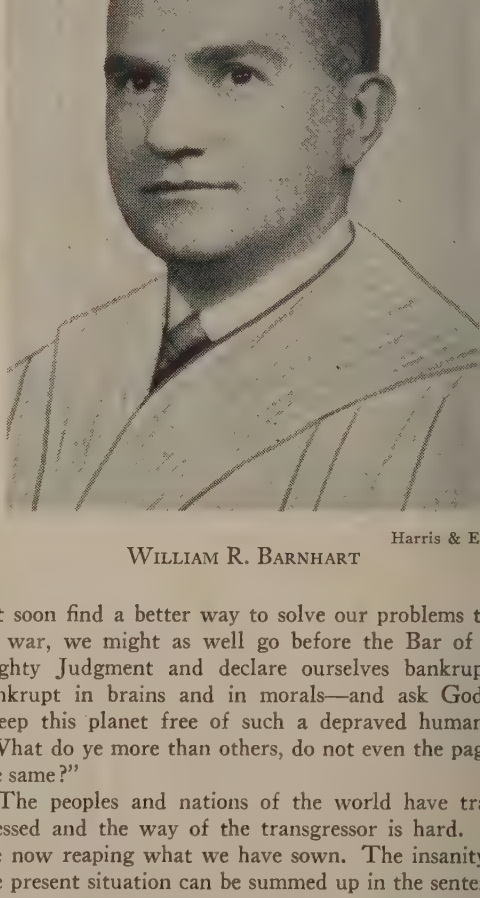
Our industrial disorder is a result of the fact that business has believed that competition is the law of life, whereas Jesus teaches the ethics of cooperation and brotherhood. We live in an acquisitive society. Jesus says: "This is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you." We have said, "Each man for himself." Jesus says, "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and all things shall be added unto you." We have said, "Seek ye first the Kingdom of Mammon —obtain wealth—and all things shall be added unto you." On most of our coinage are inscribed the words, "In God we trust." Do Americans trust the Almighty, or the almighty dollar? Jesus says, "Bear ye one another's burdens" and "Inasmuch as ye do it unto one of the least of these, ye do it unto me." We have exalted getting, not giving.

Our economic crisis was not brought about by a breakdown but by a fulfillment of God's purpose in giving us an abundance of products and leisure for which the world has been waiting and for which we should rejoice. Man has not been able to keep pace with God and utilize this abundance. "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" was proclaimed by Jesus and has been proved by history to be one of the most important laws of God. Today we do not obey it, but obey it we must. Obedience means evolution, disobedience means revolution. Instead of adjusting our ethics to economics, we must adjust our economics to our ethics. "What do ye more than others, do not even the pagans the same?"

Our international world is in a state of chaos because it has practiced the ethics of the jungle rather than the ethics of the Prince of Peace. Jesus says, "They that take the sword shall perish with the sword." Have we believed that? St. Paul says, "Love never faileth." Do we believe that? Or do we believe that battleships and armaments never fail? Armaments are a gun aimed at the very heart of civilization with the trigger held by an unsteady hand. The size of the gun is being rapidly increased and the hand is growing more unsteady. Must we accept the bitter words of Thomas Hardy that "after two thousand years of mass, we have got as far as poison gas"?

Jesus says, "Love your enemies," "Do good to those who hate you," and "Overcome evil with good." Was that the spirit of the Versailles Treaty, or did it say: "Hate your enemies and crush them"? The acid test of Christianity according to Jesus is the treatment of one's enemies. "If you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the pagans the same?" We should not make a modern success story out of the way of the cross. Christianity was corrupted by the Age of Reason and the Age of Enlightenment. Our culture of liberal rationalism emphasized the reasonableness and goodness of man and underrated his sinfulness. We must take account of the whole person and not just half of him. Man is frequently controlled passions and fears as well as by reasons and ideals. we follow the way of the cross we shall discover meaning of Gethsemane and the cross. The Christ redemption of the world must start with the cross Christ or it is not Christian.

We may glorify war all we please and our beaut flowery words will fall like ashes from our lips, cause we can never produce a Kingdom of God earth by means of an organized hell. Of course th is a certain "glory" in every war but it shines like sunlight on a sea of tears and blood. The world to is red with blood and hollow with graves. If we



Harris & E

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not soon find a better way to solve our problems t by war, we might as well go before the Bar of mighty Judgment and declare ourselves bankrup bankrupt in brains and in morals—and ask God sweep this planet free of such a depraved human "What do ye more than others, do not even the pag the same?"

The peoples and nations of the world have tr gressed and the way of the transgressor is hard. are now reaping what we have sown. The insanity the present situation can be summed up in the sente "We are trying to live by borrowing money to m munitions to kill ourselves." If Western civiliza destroys itself that would make an appropriate epita H. G. Wells tells the story of a superman who inv an airplane and an ape who gets hold of it. Tha becoming a true story of modern civilization. Hend Van Loon says that we are in danger of taking a ride with cave men in a Chevrolet. We are get

ur centuries all mixed up with twentieth century cience and cave man ethics.

The two great sins of Western civilization are social njustice and selfish nationalism. They have helped to estroy every past civilization. The Book of Revelation eclares that Rome was destroyed by its blundering nperialism and its worship of Mammon. Jesus was rofoundly pessimistic about a civilization not founded pon a rock—upon God. No social system will survive nless it is in accordance with the laws of God. Any ivilization which flouts God's laws will perish. Be ot deceived, God is not mocked.

Only a united Christendom can cope with the tre-nendous evils of our time. The world is too strong for divided church. How can Christian brotherhood xtend across the borders of a war-torn world unless t can extend across the denominational lines of Chris-ians? We should want church unity because God vants it and man needs it. The most optimistic fact of ur time is that while the world has been breaking part, there has been greater progress toward church nity than ever before.

III

The third great truth revealed by Christ is that a God of love will be the final triumphant power in the niverse. Many people are asking today, "How can ou believe in God when Hitler triumphs?" "Why loesn't God stop the war?" There are two brief nswers to such questions:

First, God cannot do the contradictory. A kingdom f love cannot be established by coercion. The one hing that force cannot compel is love. It is better that we have free will, even though we may misuse it, than or us to be robots or Charlie McCarthys compelled to lo God's will. Even scientists such as Whitehead are ow saying, "The divine order is persuasive energy and ot coercive energy."

Second, God has not deserted the world. The world as deserted God. Abraham Lincoln stated that in-tead of proclaiming that God is on our side, we should nake sure that we are on God's side. A God of love s not on either side engaged in mass murder, although e may be more against one side than the other.

It is difficult at a time like this to believe that a God of love will be the final victorious power in the niverse. But Jesus lived during a time like this. Al-hough persecuted and more cruelly wronged than any nan, he remained a dauntless optimist. He knew that he heart of the universe is love.

He could stand with calm courage before Pilate. Although it was customary for a provincial to keep his eyes downcast in the presence of a Roman ruler, Jesus ooked Pilate straight in the eye. Pilate had the mighty Roman empire back of him. Jesus had the universe behind him. Jesus could pity Pilate. He knew that he had the dominant power in the universe supporting him. He knew that evil would finally destroy itself and could only be overcome by good. He knew that long after the mighty Roman power had crumbled to dust his way of love would abide.

On the way to Golgotha we see Jesus surrounded by Roman soldiers with steel helmets and breastplates and steel shields and spears glistening in the sunlight. Between those walls of steel we see a lone figure faltering under a wooden cross. And yet he dared to believe, "I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." Was that a foolish dream? Was that the dream of a madman? Jesus could believe that because he knew that he was being upheld by the final victorious power in the universe.

Jesus experienced the world's evil at its worst. The torture of the nails on the cross represents the most cruel physical evil. The anger and the abuse of his enemies and the treason of his friends represent the worst spiritual evil. Jesus might have condemned this world. He might have turned against his enemies as some of the prophets would have done and damned this world. If so, there would have been no Christianity. Instead he prays, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." That is the answer. Jesus, baring his breast to the sharp fangs of anger, hatred and cruelty, replies: You can do anything to me, but you cannot make me stop loving you. That makes Christianity deathless and dauntless. That must be our answer. That is our only way out. His enemies could crucify and kill his body but not the love within his heart. That was the real defeat of the men who crucified Jesus. It was the fact that after they had done their worst, they could not conquer his spirit of love and make him like themselves. Even the hardened Roman centurion was compelled to cry out, "Truly this man was the Son of God." That spirit of forgiveness is our greatest proof that Jesus is divine.

The cross was reserved for the worst criminals. It was considered so despicable that it was not mentioned in polite society. But as his loving heart drips drop by drop upon that criminal cross, it transforms it into the most glorious symbol that we know. His creative and sacrificial love was so great that if he had been put to death today it could have transformed the gallows or the electric chair into the loveliest symbol of our faith. Jesus' love remains to conquer all the hatred and malice in the world. Are we willing to ally ourselves with a love like that?

In the hour of his betrayal in the garden of Gethsemane, Jesus came unto his disciples and found them asleep and said: "What, could ye not watch with me one hour?" In this hour, too, when Jesus is again being betrayed, we hear him saying: "What, could ye not watch with me one hour?"

What does it mean to be a Christian? It means to believe, first, that every personality is a child of God, a brother of Christ, our brother, and of infinitely priceless value. Second, Jesus says: "This is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I loved you." Third, it means to have faith that a God of love will be the final victorious power in the universe. "What do you more than others, do not even the pagans the same?" Jesus says, "If any man would be my disciple let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." For, as Jesus adds, "I have given you an example."

How to Deal With the Impossible

By Charles H. Heimsath

If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say to this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you. Matthew 17:20.

IF you have ever heard Berton Braley's audacious song of the Panama Canal diggers which he calls "At Your Service," you can never forget it:

Got any river they say isn't crossable?
Got any mountains that can't be cut through?
We specialize in the wholly impossible
Doing things "nobody ever could do."

What is the appeal of these lines? The magnificent confidence with which the human spirit can meet difficulties. All of us live daily with problems we cannot solve, with wants we cannot satisfy, with sickness we cannot cure, with sins we cannot master, and with death we cannot escape. But we do not mean to be whipped by impossibilities; we all long to take life in our heroic stride.

It is the business of religion to equip men for the mastery of difficulties. Religion lives and moves and has its being in the region of hardship, mystery and danger. It specializes in doing things "nobody ever could do." If we knew all mysteries, could do all things, were good without trying, there would be no need for religion. At the place where effort ceases, knowledge ends, goodness fails and life itself goes out, religion begins.

What is religion's method for dealing with impossibilities? In these words Jesus gave us the clue: "If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say to this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you." Have you ever thought of faith as man's answer to the impossible? So it is. The problem of dealing with difficulty reduces itself to the practical problem of living by faith.

I

When we live by faith, we find the seed of possibility in almost every impossible situation.

Faith is far more than believing the impossible; it is seeing possibility in the impossible. Believing the impossible may be nothing more than blindness; seeing possibility in the impossible is magnificent insight, splendid inspiration.

What was more impossible during the last decade of the nineteenth century than the malaria that infested the swamps of India, Italy and the southland of the United States? And yet this impossibility contained the seed of possibility for Ronald Ross of the British Medical Service in India and Battista Grassi of Italy —the "very distinguished authority on worms, white ants and the doings of eels." These two men supplementing each other discovered that a mosquito car the germ of malaria, and now, by the simple devic putting screens on their houses, white people can in swamps with comparative freedom from this dise

If you would know how men of science have fo the possible in the medically impossible, read Pau Kruif's fascinating book, *Microbe Hunters,* the ron tic story of disease fighters. Hydrophobia, diphth sleeping sickness, bubonic plague impossible? fighters with death found the seed of possibilit every one of these impossible diseases. Cancer im sible? The microbe hunters are searching now for possibility in this dread impossibility. In the maga *Life* was pictured the battle in the laboratory aga that disease, Dr. Clarence Cook Little fighting gri in the Jackson Memorial Hospital at Bar Harbor, Dr. Warner Lewis and his wife, Dr. Margaret Reed, carrying on secret warfare at Johns Hopk Give the microbe hunters a little more time and will master cancer!

Dean Brown of Yale said that he believed faith remove mountains because he had so often seen f remove mountains. Men of insight have char menacing physical impossibilities into beneficent terial possibilities. What could be more forbid than a bolt of lightning? Yet Franklin with his found in it the electric current. Edison took that s unmastered current and transformed it into li What could be more uncontrollable than a flood? engineers have captured floods behind dams harnessed their power to the wheels of factories directed their waters to irrigate waste lands. scientists have changed the very *venom* of germs *virus* for preventative in inoculation.

In human relations, too, faith has power to ren mountains of misunderstanding and unhappiness. us bring our thought down to the impossibilities we live with daily. I suspect questions like these ar your minds, "How can I meet that note?" "Ha lost her love?" "Can my son make good?" "What the doctor say?" "Shall I be found out?" "How I get that job?" "How shall I settle that proble the office?" Take your old, haunting impossib and look at it again with the eyes of faith; maybe will find the seed of possibility in it!

II

Again, we use faith to deal with the impossible cause faith is not an abstract way of thinking b creative way of living.

The worst possible thing that can happen is t whipped by difficulty, to be stopped by impossib The sagging knees, the hands that hang limp at sides—to do nothing is the worst possible thing we do! In speaking of the pernicious influence of a ce metropolitian daily, Rabbi Wise once said, "N fear, we shall circumvent them." Make a flank tack upon difficulty; take it in the rear. Once afte disciples had fished all night and caught nothing, Lord, when he met them on the beach at dawn, ma suggestion that was so simple that people even

eldom see that it was profound—"Cast your net on he other side of the boat." Try something else; when he old ways fail, try a new way. The man of faith is eldom impoverished; when he is baffled by one side, e tries the other side of his impossibility.

What is faith? In *Alice Through the Looking Glass* he queen declared that she was one hundred years ld, five months, and one day. "I can't believe it," aid Alice. "Can't you?" replied the queen. "Try gain, draw a long breath and shut your eyes." As he little boy expressed it, "Faith is believing what we now ain't so." A great many people think vaguely of aith as the effort to believe the impossible. Confusing

Charles H. Heimsath

t with credulity, they reduce it to superstition. Others ıave the hazy notion that religious faith is an incantaion that can work wonders. Confusing it with magic, hey reduce it to sorcery. But religious faith is not an mpossible way of doing the impossible.

Faith is not so much an intellectual as it is a moral uality. Faith is a creative way of living, living with ıope and courage and satisfaction. Says William Adams Brown of faith: "It is a capacity which we ıossess as human beings of appropriating the true ignificance of realities with which we are in contact t all times." The late Bishop George Craig Stewart aid of faith: "It is the adventurous quality of the magination and will, a kind of high and noble courage, ınd its opposite is not intellectual skepticism but worry ınd cowardice and despair." The opposite of faith is ıot unbelief, but impotence.

When he descended from the Mount of Transiguration, Jesus found his disciples defeated by an act of faith which they had tried but could not do. Pointing to the height, he said that a mustard seed of faith has in it more power than a mountain. Certainly it has. Because there is no life in a mountain; however large, it is a dead thing. Certainly it has, because there is life in a seed; however small, it is a creative thing. It is not at all surprising, when you come to think of it, that a living thing like a seed could move a dead thing like a mountain. Deceived by the bulk of the mountain we have forgotten the vitality of the seed. Nor is it surprising that dead material things should give way to the creative human spirit. What Jesus was saying, in effect, is that mind is master over matter, that the spirit is stronger than the body, and that life is victorious over death.

III

When we live by faith, we make alliance with the resources of the universe.

In the seed is promise and energy; in it also is a living response. It drinks the sweet moisture, nestles in the womb of earth, and sends up its tender shoot to greet the sunshine. It may have a tiny and humble home, but it has a home in the universe. So faith again is like that seed; it brings us into harmony with the universe. Says Grant David Batdorf in his sermon entitled "The Energy of Faith:" "It has no meaning until it has been translated into action. . . . Faith is of the realm of action. . . . It is not intellectual consent to truth, but moral consent to it."

Again, the opposite of faith is not doubt but disharmony. Christian faith is far more than knowledge of the truth; it is obedience to truth, willingness to act upon truth. It is a matter of conscience as well as of insight.

You remember the remark of the man who said, "It is not what I do not know about God that bothers me, but what I know all too well." The trouble with him was not in his head but in his heart. He lacked not the knowledge, but the goodness to live by faith. Jesus always linked faith, not with knowledge, but with repentance. It may be that power to do the impossible will never come until we lay hold of that power by our honesty, truth, goodness and love.

There is this remarkable observation in the Gospel of John: "Many believed in his name, . . . but Jesus did not commit himself unto them." Why did Jesus not trust himself to them? Because they did not trust themselves to him. They had knowledge, but they were unwilling to undertake the risks of faith. Dean Swift said that the first man who ate the first oyster took a tremendous risk of faith. So did the first man who followed Christ take a tremendous risk. But until we risk all for the Kingdom of God we can never enter it. Until we commit ourselves to him, he can never commit himself to us. Says Frederick W. Norwood: "They only are honest whom honesty herself would trust; they only are pure whom purity would trust." There are two sides to an effort of faith. Until we trust our brother, there can be no answering trust in the human heart; until we trust God, there can be no answering trust from the divine.

In the last analysis, power to do the impossible is

not with ourselves but with God. Jesus said, "The things which are impossible with men are possible with God." In Hebrews is the familiar definition, "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." The old word "substance" translated here means literally "title-deed to real estate." The man of faith is a man who has a title-deed to things divine. He has a holding in the unseen upon which he can draw in time of need.

Christians are not called upon to confront the grim, enormous tasks of life alone. Always standing beside the man of faith is One who has never known defeat. When Moses obeyed to lead Israel out of Egypt, he was not alone, for God spoke to him from the burning bush; when Gideon dismissed his twenty thousand and set out with a handful to attack the Midianites, he was not alone, because God was with that handful; when Elisha attacked the evil forces which ruled the city, he was not alone, because God showed him the heavenly host which is forever encamped about them that fear him. The modern man of faith is not alone in his struggle, because the stars in their courses fight on his side. When an old guide in the Alps saw a man trembling on the edge of a crevasse, he reached down to him a strong reassuring hand: "Here man, take this hand. It has never lost a man." To the man of faith battling against fearful odds, God reaches down his hand, that hand which has never lost a man.

The Power of Prayer

PRAYER seems to be a futile thing, and yet we have evidence that it is more powerful than physical force. Dr. George Buttrick, president of the Federal Council of Churches, in a recent broadcast, called prayer "a spiritual force stronger than armies." Can that be true? Many folk have lost their faith in prayer, because they say, "It is so futile."

But the fact remains that Jesus lived by prayer. That is to say, in the life he lived prayer occupied an indispensable place. Before he began his public ministry, which was a severe strain upon all his physical, moral and spiritual life, he went aside for forty days of flesh-denying prayer. Before he selected his apostles, upon whose shoulders he put his mantle and in whose hands he would put his flaming torch, he spent all night in prayer. When he came to Caesarea Philippi and realized that the disciples comprehended, in a small degree, at least, something of his mission in the world and something of his nature, he went into an exceedingly high mountain and prayed.

It is possible for prayer to save men from hatred—to save them from those spiritual sins that will degrade them to the level of the beast. It is possible for prayer to be such a force to the soul of man that he can act like the son of God even in an hour like this. What I would like to say to you, is this: When you pray, if you don't busy yourself with foolish things, and try to dictate to God, it is possible for a human soul to become Godlike in the hour of prayer. No marching armies can finally win against such power. How the world needs to understand that right now!

HARRY L. ICE, in *Kansas City Journal.*

Comfort by the Way

BY J. V. MOLDENHAWER

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord J Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all c fort; who comforteth us in all our affliction, that may be able to comfort them that are in any afflic through the comfort wherewith we ourselves are c forted of God. II Corinthians 1:3, 4.

I SET as the theme of this sermon the very sir words, "Comfort by the Way." And I think passage which I have chosen from Holy Scripture the text is perhaps the most beautifully inclusive to be found in the Bible on this great theme. Com by the way, by a way that is a hard way; by a wa which all the world, whether all are quite ready choose it or not, in one fashion or another is dest to walk, for God only knows how long. Only a n given to the silliest sort of irrational cheerfulness persuade itself that the road on which we are going is a short road. How long, no one knows; it certainly will not be short.

And so, in natural human distress, we ask ourse from time to time what comfort we can have by way. Can we have any? Yes, we can. There is c fort to be had for every believer in God. And ther of course, the greatest meaning in the word com when the soul is in severe trial. When all goes w when all goes gaily, we think readily of Bunyan the silver slippers. The fortunate man fancies comfort is in the situation. He need not trouble a more than that. That unhappily is the common havior of the human soul. One of the old sayings everybody remembers is this: "The river passed God forgot." Why should he not be forgot? Falstaff, approaching his end, cries out: "God, God!" And Dame Quickly, that thoroughly muno person, soothes him by suggesting: "It is too early to talk about God."

So we want comfort. Well, the Bible would have so much in it about comfort if it were not inter that poor human souls in times of trial should be c forted. First let me mention one or two things in w everybody tries to find comfort.

COMFORT IN HOME AND RECREATION

We all try to find comfort in our home. It natural comfort. Thank God for it. There are m persons who manage somehow to live through day's work by keeping in their minds, perhaps sub raneously, the remembrance that at five o'clock they going home. We will not even stop to spend a mon of pity on a man whose home is so slightly attrac that he thinks of going to many other places first, because he must, but because he will.

But in this very trying time let us be sure that comfort we get out of our homes is the comfort should get. Let it not be a selfish comfort. Let no among us especially—and I say "man" sharply—no man among us take merely for granted the com and the quiet of home, which in itself is brought

eing and sustained by the devoted attention of others, nuch of it quite unseen by his unobserving eyes. Let us be ure that the comfort we have out of our dear relations vith those beloved, is as good and as high as it should e. Let us understand each other as well as we can. Let us not some day find ourselves in the unhappy osition of remembering with bitterness that we did ot know as well as we should have known someone uite close to us.

All take comfort in what they call their recreations. Well, let it be so. There is no reason in the world why nan should not, in the midst of bitter circumstances,

J. V. Moldenhawer

e-create himself. There is no reason why he should ot know jollity and fun.

But this also should be said. If ever there was a ime in which we ought to correct our thought of vhat good amusement is, that time is now. I have never een very tolerant of the easygoing attitude held by great many persons nowadays toward the question f public amusement. I suppose having been brought p in the south makes me in these matters more or less f a Puritan. I have never yet learned to be happy n the thought that so many people will go to a play, ny kind of play, with a sort of ill-placed toleration or badness of behavior and speech that ought not to e the mark of any Christian. We have no business ow to take pleasure in things that are obscene, to use he old plain word.

'COMFORT IS A GOOD STOUT WORD'

Now let me say two or three things about the larger neaning of the word comfort. There are a good many eople who think they are seeking comfort when all they are asking is to be soothed. It is not the same thing. We have no right to be soothed. We are not babies. We are not entitled to ask that we should be lulled to our slumbers by lullabies for grown-ups. Comfort is not that. Look at your Bible. Comfort is a good, stout word. Comfort is something that has strength in it. If you let yourself look at two or three of the most magnificent passages about comfort, what do you find? In the closing discourse of the Gospel of John, Christ says that when he is gone he will send a comforter who is to abide with us forever. The comforter is to be the spirit of truth, and will lead us into all truth. The comforter, according to Christ, is a strong spirit, that strong son of God that is truth and life. As we go through the Psalms the same sturdy quality in the word comfort appears again and again. You remember that lovely passage, which I suppose most of us can never read nowadays without hearing in our mind how it is sung at the beginning of "The Messiah": "Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people; speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem and say unto her that her warfare is accomplished." There is no flabbiness in those words, only strength.

COURAGEOUS WORDS IN A DARK TIME

Let us go on from that and see how many things we can take comfort in.

First I suggest this to you. Take comfort in the courageous words of those who are now in dire peril. How thankful I am and we all are for the messages that come from the other side of the water, showing us how strong in the spirit of a comfort afforded by God are those souls beloved of us. I have here two simple illustrations. I had the really happy opportunity of reading a letter received sometime ago by one of our own people from a near relative on the other side. There are two little stories in it.

The one is about the cheery bus conductor who was always full of quips and witty sayings. One morning the passengers noticed that he was apparently in higher spirits than ever before. Somebody asked him why he was so particularly happy, and he replied: "Why should I not be happy? Last night the Jerries took all the tile off my house and broke all my windows and smashed my possessions. We have had our turn, and me and Jenny are safe."

And here is another, very close akin to it, in the same letter. "Gertrude Govan had a narrow escape in Coventry. The house was damaged, her office entirely destroyed, and in the morning the charwoman said: 'Oh, Miss Govan, your lovely office is destroyed, and all those beautiful dusters I washed yesterday is gone.'"

COMFORT IN DOING GOOD TO OTHERS

Then there is this way of comfort. We can find—and this is one of the miraculous processes—we can find comfort ourselves in the process of giving comfort to others. There is nothing to compare with the bleak dislike that a man has of himself, surely the most discouraging of all sensations, when he realizes that he has been shutting his heart to the distress of other people. They may not even know it, but the man who

sees suddenly that he has been closing his heart to their distress is in for what the French call a bad quarter-of-an-hour. Can anything be worse than the dryness of soul that comes of not saying the good word and of not doing the good deed when we have the opportunity? Is there in any stretch of our remembrances as sour a moment to call back as that occasion on which, as we know now, we had God's glorious chance to do something good and failed to do it?

TRAGIC SINS OF OMISSION

For my part, I think it is by no mere accident that we find in the parable of Jesus on the Last Judgment the sins of omission crowding everything else out. You remember it. When those who are on the Judge's left hand are sent into the outer darkness, why are they sent there? They have been sent there because when people were hungry they did not feed them; when people were thirsty they did not give them drink; when people were in prison they did not go to visit them; when people were sick they paid no attention to them. Not, not, not! "Inasmuch as ye did it not for one of the least of these, ye did it not for Me." It is a bad experience when we realize we are giving no comfort to other souls. I think there is a new use there for the phrase that has come back to many people's memories because "Twelfth Night" is being played again today—"barren rascals." Barren rascals—that is what we are when we afford no comfort to other people.

Let us find comfort by giving comfort to others. Get comfort out of being able to send to people in need, who would not otherwise have what we send. If it all went down in the Western Prince, send it over again. More will go down in other ships. That is part of the hard road we have stretching before us. Everything is not going to be pleasantly arranged. There will be no swift bend of the road in the right direction. But meanwhile continue to send, continue to give. Send the word. Let not our friends on the other side of the water say to themselves over and over again,"I wonder why I never hear from John," with no better answer to be afforded than that John is half asleep. So let us get comfort out of sending comfort to others.

BRAVE WORDS OF DISTRAUGHT SOULS

Then there is the magnificent comfort that anybody who wants can have, the remembrance of stories that have come out of the past of the way in which people have faced disaster, danger, even death itself, and have done so with courage and gaiety. I never get tired of certain stories of the way men have died. Some of them were pretty hard men, but they redeem themselves in my sight by their behavior when the end came. It gives me comfort to think of the burly Danton, who was one of the heroes of the French Revolution, and not a particularly gentle soul. He turned to the executioner just before he was pushed under the knife, and said: "Show my head to the people. It is worth looking at."

There was a book written some years ago by a Congregational minister, Dr. Frederick Rowland Marvin. It bears the rather stilted Victorian title, *Last W of Distinguished Men and Women.* But there it is alphabetical arrangement of what he had discovered digging here and there to find out the way in wh some hundreds of notable persons faced the appro of death. I found there this story of the death in revolution of Honduras years ago of one of those refused deliverance. They did not want him to be and they offered him his life if he would agree neve take up arms against the government again. He fused, and when he and his companions stood before firing squad, this is what he said: "We are ready. diers, fire!" He stands side by side with Napole famous cavalry general Murat, who, being a man proud of his personal appearance, said: "Sold spare my face. Aim at my heart."

What did these men have? Something tough durable and upholding. Not all of them were relig men, but all of them were men who had a stiffnes them. That is what makes them objects of a ha contemplation, at least for me. I think of the sto told of Hugh Peters. Hugh Peters was a queer cha ter. You will find him in the *National Biogra* of Great Britain and of our country as well, bec he spent some time in the New England colonies; everything said about him is not pleasant. The came when he was to face death as a regicide, bec he was one of the men concerned in putting Charl to death. With the barbarity of executions in t days, he was made to sit inside the rail and look while the man who preceded him was cut down f the gallows and dismembered before his eyes. And executioner with the callousness of his profession of his times, asked him how he liked his technique. all Hugh Peters said was this: "Friend, you do well to trample on a dying man."

There they are, a great register of men who h when they had to die, known how to die.

WITNESSES TO THE FAITH

Then I remind you of the comfort that comes of the wise and strong words of those who have rec ed the significance and the power of faith in God. find these words in what I call books of religion over against books about religion. Anybody can w about religion; men who know nothing about reli have written books about it. But these are books o religion that pours out of the heart, books like Buny *Pilgrim's Progress* and Taylor's *Holy Living and D Dying.* Go to them. Let me tell you that you are ing a mistake if in a time like this you are not stren ening your soul by reading the strong words of de devout men. Strong words, not the soothing typ religionism that makes us feel as if we are being suaded not to see what is before us, plain as a pikes No. These men are not afraid of the facts. I t there can be nothing more vigorously realistic than passage from *The Imitation of Christ:*

> Sometimes thou wilt be forsaken of God, somet thou wilt be tried by thy neighbor, and which is n thou wilt often be wearisome to thyself. And still

canst not be delivered nor eased by any remedy or consolation, but must bear so long as God will. For God will have thee learn to suffer tribulation without consolation, and submit thyself fully to it, and by tribulation be made more humble. No man understandeth the Passion of Christ in his heart so well as he who hath had somewhat of the like suffering himself. The Cross therefore is always ready, and everywhere waiteth for thee. Thou canst not flee from it whithersoever thou hurriest, for whithersoever thou comest, thou bearest thyself with thee and shalt ever find thyself. Turn thee above, turn thee below, turn thee without, turn thee within, and in them all thou shalt find the Cross, and needful is it that thou everywhere possess patience if thou wilt have internal peace and gain the everlasting crown.

'THERE ARE TORCHES THAT DO NOT GO OUT'

And last of all, be sure that in these trying times you not fail to get all the comfort you should out of ur Bible. Here is a time in which we may go back it, even to the passages we know best, and find in em something we have never found before, for the od and simple reason that we never before lived in a me like this. Never! Try some of those passages you ink are favorite passages. Take them and read them id remember your background. Read "Comfort ye, mfort ye, my people," and remember while reading at the bombs are raining down on people whom you ve. Read the great passage in the Epistle to the omans. Read the words, "If God be for us who can against us?" Read that, and let that say what it ght to say to your soul in a time like this, when you are almost tempted to believe that what is against us is so strong that we will never, never make final and successful headway against it.

Then you will have comfort. And there is only one simple condition. Here is the way the text reads: "God . . . comforteth us in all our affliction that we may be able to comfort them that are in any affliction through the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God." In other words, we must not be selfish. Get the comfort from God in order that, having a heartful, you may pour it out to the people who have most need of it, and it will be a very wonderful thing. And we shall be prepared to look forward without fear.

It is odd that I should be willing to give you as the last words of this sermon a sentence that is almost the closing one of a very simple but brilliantly written story of adventure with the present time as its background, a story written to while away an idle hour. An old man is speaking to two young people who seem to be in love with each other but are not quite sure, and are more than a little afraid because of what is coming; each one of them hears the whisper of the word "war." And this is what the old man says: "The shadows are dark over Europe. We must wait, knowing that always there are torches which do not go out." And that is as good a word of comfort as I have come across in many a day.

PROTESTANTISM will never have a God good enough to match its experience of grace until it exercises the courage to find its God wholly, really, sufficiently, daringly, in Jesus Christ. W. P. MERRILL.

A Pastoral Prayer

By HENRY R. ROSE

T is good, our Heavenly Father, to pause in these hurried and worried lives of ours, and think of ne who is never hurried or worried.

Hast Thou not seen little man lift his defiant fist ward heaven and curse Thee, his Father and Friend? last Thou not watched the armies of the nations dry- g up the earth on their march and deluging it with aternal blood? Hast Thou not beheld lightning and rthquakes, tornadoes and terrific eruptions of devas- ting volcanoes until the heavens were red and the rth reeled to and fro? Yet Thou hast remained as lm as the evening star, and hast held as steadily to hy course.

Thou art unperturbed because Thou knowest that hou art in complete control of everything and every- ne. Thy calm is like that of the captain of a great cean liner in the midst of thunderous seas, who knows is ship is sound and that his powerful propellers will bey his masterful hand on the wheel.

We would, O God, that we might rise high above ur little concerns, grievous as they may seem, and and by Thy very side. We would that we might ink Thy thoughts after Thee and make Thy ways ur ways. Then we, too, would be confident in the blackest night and march right onward, into the light.

Give us more faith, O Father, such as our lesser and weaker brethren know—the birds, the little creatures of the woods and fields, even the fish of the sea. They trust God, and are happy. And so may we.

Give us more hope, O God, such as the roots and buds and blossoms show. Even though they wait long ere winter go, they wait confidently for spring, which they know will surely come.

Give us more love, O Father, such as all creation manifests as all things work together for the good of all. A selfish nation cannot prosper in this unselfish universe. We must become friendly neighbors. We must cease thinking of our own rights only and think of the larger rights of all. Father in heaven and on earth, increase our love, our good will, our ministry of helpful kindness to all.

Touch the ill with Thy healing hand. Dry the tears of the sorrowing. Remove the anguish of the penitent. Walk very close to the lonely. Sweeten the memories and brighten the anticipations of the aged. Guard the footsteps of the young. Keep us all very near the side of our Brother and Inspirer, Jesus Christ, in whose spirit we pray. Amen.

Getting the Message Across

By Arthur Wentworth Hewitt

WHEN I was a boy, somebody whom I am happy to have forgotten gave me a toy boat. Eagerly I took it to the little pond in the upper field and launched it. The leaden thing sank at once to the bottom. It had all the form and appearance of a boat but no skill could make it float. The first requisite of "getting the message across" is to have a message which will go crosswise. Deplorable numbers of messages having the form of sermons are so heavy that they drop to the mud at the bottom of the stagnant minds in attendance.

For you can depend on the stagnation of the minds in attendance. At times, under stimulation, in relation to their own interests, these minds will be alert enough—some few of them—but even these are passive putty in the pews. If a sermon does not challenge what the older psychologists called involuntary attention, it is lost. It must be vital enough so that the hearer shall be like the Ancient Mariner—"He cannot choose but hear." If it is not interesting it really does not exist. Bishop Quayle used to say that the sin of being uninteresting is an exceedingly mortal sin. Stupidity is stillborn—though, alas! it is still born!

I

The message which it is possible to get across has these qualities:

● *Rich Content and Clear Sequence*

1. It is full of rich, real subject matter. A brilliant turn of expression will sometimes challenge attention for a moment, but *cargo* is the occasion of a ship going. No manner of saying can excuse the absence of having real things to say, so significant, so objective as to force themselves on the attention, and to be inescapable by memory and meditation. (I usually bring away from the hearing of sermons the thought—how little has been said.)

2. Clear, evolving, inevitable sequence is the next factor. The most valuable thoughts may be blurred and rendered ineffective by not being clearly and forcibly arranged. Right organization is mighty in making the main points of a message stand out like the peaks of a mountain range.

● *Must 'Do Something' to the Hearer*

3. No message will really get across which does not have some direct emotional relation to the life of the hearer. I used to think there were exceptions to this. For instance, there might be hearers so logical or philosophical as to love to hear a well organized message even if it were as remote as Orion from their personal lives. Now I know these are not exceptions, for to such a mind the hearing of a well organized message is in itself an emotional experience, like the joy of some man who likes to watch a horse race though he was never a jockey. But most of us cannot trust to being high examples of homiletic art, and woe to that message that lays no hand on the heart.

A girl in Columbia College said to me, "Your sermon last night *did something* to me." The next evening my heart sank when I saw her walk out of the meeting. But before time for the message she came back bringing others whom she had gone out to find. A message must "do something" to somebody. It never does until the heart is reached, and that never happens until the real issues of personal life are touched.

You remember Austin Phelps' famous definition of the sermon as "an oral address upon religious truth, contained in the Scriptures, elaborately treated with a view to persuasion." The sermon which gets across will result in persuasion, conviction of conscience, comfort, or some other of the many effects which are emotional in their processes. The living sermon makes a difference with life.

● *Sermons Founded on Scriptures*

4. A fourth characteristic which I believe a sermon must have to get across is a deep foundation in the Scriptures. Herein lie the only superiority and authority of our mission. The world is full of worldly wisdom. If ours is of that kind we shall only be doing feebly the same kind of thing which is better done elsewhere, and of which the world is wearied to desperate boredom. Out of this confusion of worldly wisdom, people bewildered almost to madness are looking to find the Word of God, the truth which is eternal. Out of all teachers on earth we of the pulpit are the only ones consecrated to the search and the utterance of that divine Word.

This generation knows vastly *more about* the Bible than the fathers knew. It knows far *less Bible* than they knew. But amid the swirl of the temporal it is longing, whether it knows it or not, for the assurance of the eternal. An authentic mes from God's Word is already half-across.

● *Proper Ch of The*

5. Do you know that irreve little volume, *The Log of the* On the fourth day out, Noah cords, "Nothing I eat stays et." fifth value in the message which across will be that it avoids t themes for which the soul ha natural emetic reaction.

In times of great disaster these crammed down unwilling spiri throats in sickening numbers. W happens is twofold. On the par the hearer the experience is tha the week his mind has been batt by the impact of the temporal— example, the present war. This filled the newspapers, the street versations, the radio broadcasts, columns of the brilliant commenta and the public consciousness u though it may be the most interes single fact in the present world, poor man is sick of it, and filled an utter longing to escape from it a day into a realm of truth hi than that of temporal incident. S goes to church, to escape the Alas! he finds that, on the other h the preacher has felt that he mus the prophet of the hour and do duty. Therefore behold him in pulpit doing feebly (for he is no home in it) the kind of thing of w the hearer has been wearied to na all the week in the columns whe was done brilliantly.

I do not mean that a preache never to touch themes of the Briefly, in subservience to gre truth, it may sometimes be done. when it becomes the main busines a sermon it takes away the hea last hope that there is any high ete refuge, any gospel which is not slave of the drive of worldly circ stance. The confidence that her a great steadying power is destro and no more messages will get ac

II

Content alone is not sufficient to a message across. The truth mus set free by the right manner of terance. Lazarus might have Lazarus when Jesus called him fo but he was of the *lazar* not o until they loosed him and let him Truth is not vital if delivered stagey, unreal manner without emphasis of conviction. As to ma

f utterance these things are im-
ortant:

● *Forthright and Direct Speech*

1. Forthright, eye-to-eye, conversa-
ional, extemporaneous speech, if pos-
ible. (It is always possible for the
oung to train themselves to this
ıethod.) God has richly blessed all
ıethods of preaching and still will
o so, but beyond all doubt, *ceteris*
aribus, this method has most of
eality, of grip on the emotions, of
ersuasion.

Contrary to what is sometimes be-
eved, it is the method which, in a
onscientious preacher, insures the
est preparation. Slipshod extempor-
neous speech has been frequent—
) also slipshod writing. You may
rite extemporaneously and think
ourself prepared, but if you have to
ace five hundred eyes and, without a
crap of paper on the desk or in your
isual memory, give clear, orderly,
rogressive, gripping truth for half an
our, then there is no doubt that your
ıought *must* be well prepared. This
the method which makes the hearer
el, "He is talking out of his heart
) *me.*"

● *Pictorial and Human Approach*

2. An illustrative method, the illus-
rations always subservient to the
ruth which they picture and never
iven for their own sakes, may seem
mple; that is why it is such pro-
ound psychology. A picture ad-
ressed to the imagination in words,
ke a picture addressed to the eye on
anvas, is impressive and memorable.
t will recall the truth if it is a good
lustration and will be remembered
fter the truth is forgotten if it is
ıerely a good *picture.* You need
ecall only two things to understand
ow the well illustrated truth gets
ome: the eager interest shown by
dults in your stories to the children,
nd the way our Lord taught in
arables.

3. The human approach is essential.
ll that makes such perfect com-
ıunion of an intimate fireside con-
ersation between personal friends is
orth remembering here. Within the
mits which any man of taste and
raining will feel to be reasonable, do
ot ever be afraid of humor, of
athos, of experience, of anything
hich is human, which is of the
eart, and is spoken not for its own
ake but for that of the gospel which
sets forth.

● *'Husks' That Prevent Effectiveness*

4. Husk your homiletics. We farm-
rs strip the golden ears of every bit
f encumbering husk. We are so full
f faults that we may not be able to
tear them all away, but the more we can do so the less will be left to distract attention from our message. A message just cannot get across to the absent-minded. Tear away the husks which distract. I have just heard a funeral address in which an ignorant preacher referred to our lives as a "vappor which vanishes away." Now "vappor" is a good pronounciation and perhaps all democrats should vote for it, but because it is out of favor with the dictionary it seriously, though humorously, distracted my attention.

But do not think that distracting faults are confined to the ignorant. I once heard a preacher who is justly famous throughout the nation describing a patient who had a "pain here, and a pain there, and another pain there." But instead of indicating the here and there of those pains by a touch on his body, he pointed his extended hand to the church door, to the top of a tree and to Ursa Major. The result was that I was intrigued by a pathology which was like the man in Stephen Leacock's nonsense novel who "leaped to the back of his horse and rode madly away in all directions," and I missed the speaker's next point while I tried to imagine the universality of pain.

III

It is worth while to say a word about such environing circumstances as can be controlled. Some cannot. Many a message fails to get across because it is launched "in the fell clutch of circumstance."

If a howling gang of children let loose from Sunday school are playing beside a little church with clear glass windows, the mess will murder the message. So far as possible it is our duty to provide environing conditions which further the sacred message.

Just as God "hardened the heart of Pharaoh" by means intended to soften it, so sometimes by means intended to be worshipful we give the message a great handicap through utter lack of common sense. Recently I attended service in an old New England meetinghouse in which the pulpit-centered architecture had been replaced by the chancel type with central altar and cross. This change represents the greatest present-day movement in worship, and is good in a church which can bear it. But church architecture is a root-and-branch matter of the whole building, and the church of which I am speaking was one which cried out to high heaven for the simple pulpit-centered type of the tradition in which it was built. The change was architecturally inharmonious far beyond the verge of the ludicrous. Altar, cross and reredos drapery were not so bad, though somewhat huddled, but there was no way to place the pulpit well. That of course never stops anybody who joins a movement without considering whether he is a fit member of it.

So all through an excellent sermon I was afflicted by exasperating attacks of absent-mindedness because of the vandalism before me. The pulpit and its chairs looked exactly like furniture violently displaced during a spring housecleaning. The message was blocked by its environment.

In the November issue Dr. **HALFORD E. LUCCOCK** will contribute a Preacher Problem article on the subject

Preaching From the Bible

He testifies: "I graduated from the theological seminary back in the bronze age; perhaps a better metallurgical term would be 'the age of brass.' In those days quite a number of us young Apolloses on graduating, having become men, put away such childish things as texts and Bible stories. I, for one, in the pulpit lived amid the immensities and starry galaxies. But after a while, when the longsuffering congregation had heard my sermon on 'The March of Progress' (for progress was marching in those days), and the one on 'Science and Religion,' and the one on 'Pragmatism' (for pragmatism was going big then), like the Prodigal Son I began to be in want.

"Then I came to myself and said, 'In my Father's Book are texts enough and to spare.' And I said, 'I will arise and go to the Bible.' I was not the only one with that experience. I found out, as many have, that when we put aside the Bible as the chief source of preaching, we have thrown away the most dramatic material possible, we have sold a great birthright for a mess of generalities. . . ."

• WHO'S WHO in THIS ISSUE •

REV. HAROLD B. KERSCHNER has spent his entire ministry in student centers. Since 1931 he has served the First Presbyterian Church, Poughkeepsie, N. Y., and for ten years prior to this pastorate ministered at Old First Reformed Church, Philadelphia, one of the campus churches of the University of Pennsylvania. Graduating from Ursinus College and Eden Seminary, he also has graduate degrees from Columbia and Union Seminary. For the past five years he has served as chairman of his denomination's Committee on Spiritual Life. His sermon published in this issue was delivered before the Presbyterian General Assembly this year.

Since last June Rev. HOWARD J. CONN has been pastor of First Congregational Church, Great Barrington, Mass. For several years he was co-pastor of a non-denominational church, Union Memorial Church, Glenbrook, Conn. He was graduated from Leland Stanford University in 1932 and the following year was San Francisco Harvard Club scholar to Harvard where he pursued graduate work in philosophy. In 1936 he received his B.D. degree from Yale Divinity School.

*A graduate of the University of Mich*igan and Yale, Rev. CHARLES J. WOOD spent five years as a pastor in Detroit, nine years in Elizabeth, N. J. For four years he has ministered at First Presbyterian Church, Pueblo, Colo. He is chairman of his presbytery's Committee on Social Action and a member of its Committee on Education.

Rev. WILLIAM R. BARNHART *was p*
fessor of Philosophy and religion at Pacific Univers
1927-30, and head of the department of religion at Hc
University 1930-40. Since last year he has been execut
secretary of the Washington (D. C.) Federation
Churches. He received his education at Johns Hopki
Columbia and Union Seminary.

Having been awarded his M.A. deg
by the University of Texas, Rev. CHARLES H. HEIMSA
taught in that school for four years. He pursued th
logical studies at Yale and received his B.D. the
Following a pastorate at First Baptist Church, Brid
port, Conn., he went to First Church, Evanston, I
where he now ministers.

Born in Finland, Rev. J. V. MOLD
HAWER received his education at Southwestern Colle
Memphis, Tenn., and at Union Seminary. He was
dained in the Presbyterian ministry in 1900. From 19
to 1927 he was pastor of Second Church and Westmins
Church in Albany, N. Y. Since 1927 he has ministered
First Church in New York city.

Rev. ARTHUR W. HEWITT *is minis*
of the Methodist Church at Riverton, Vt., and author
Steeples Among the Hills and *Highland Shepherds.*
other book from his pen, *God's Back Pasture,* is to
published this autumn.

Rev. HENRY R. ROSE *is pastor emeri*
of the Church of the Redeemer (Universalist), Newa
N. J.

TITLES AND TEXTS — What Pulpit Readers are Preaching About

HAROLD ROBERTS, First Christian, Ottumwa, Ia. "How Large Is *Your* World?" Psalm 24-1—"The earth is the Lord's and its fulness, the world and those who dwell therein."

HUGH M. MILLER, Presbyterian, Roslyn, Pa. "Where Is Liberty?" II Cor. 3:17—"Where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty."

BRUCE B. WENDT, Whitehall-Asbury Methodist, Columbus, O. "The Church Is for the Workingman." Matt. 11:28—"Come unto me, all ye that labor . . ."

DONALD B. BLACKSTONE, Church of the Covenant, New York city. "The Power to Stand Up and Take It." Eph. 6:13—". . . and having done all, to stand."

FOR YOUR SERMON AND TEXT

Title of sermon

Text used (write out the text)

Name of minister

Name of church

Address

SAM HEDRICK, Rosedale Methodist, Kansas City, K
"Turn Your Prison into a Palace." Phil. 1:13—"
bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace, and
all other places."

H. PAUL ROMIES, First Lutheran, San Bernardino,
"This Is the Life." Luke 10:25, 27—"What shal
do to inherit eternal life? . . . Thou shalt love . . .

ROBERT H. EADS, First Baptist, Delavan, Wis. "Relig
Cannot Be Rationed." Jer. 29:14—"And ye shall s
me and find me when ye shall seek for me with
your heart."

PAUL J. FOLINO, United Church of South Chicago. "
Prodigal of the Universe." Psalm 8:4—"What is m
O God, that thou art mindful of him?"

H. W. HERSLEY, First Evangelical, Lock Haven,
"The Secret of Creative Living." Gal. 2:20—"I
crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I
Christ liveth in me."

L. W. HUNTER, First Presbyterian, Oelwein, Ia. "W
Is Wrong with Us?" I Sam. 4:3—"Wherefore h
the Lord smitten us today?"

JOHN VAN EMAN BERGER, First Presbyterian, Port
Wis. "The Shelter of Christ's Strength." II Cor. 12:
"Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my we
ness, that the power of Christ may rest upon me."

The Editor's Page

The Event of the Month

THE President has taken the nation another step and perhaps a decisive step into the war. In his speech on September 11 he announced that he ad given orders to the navy operating in Atlantic vaters not to wait for an attack by Axis submarines or other warships but to "shoot first." This order he based upon five instances in which nazi submarines had attacked merican ships (or ships formerly owned by American ompanies). The President argued that these attacks aken together indicated a set purpose on the part of ne Axis to challenge America's effort to carry aid to Great Britain. The effect of the "shoot first" order virtually to put the navy of the United States in ne war, for the order covers not only the route to celand, but as was later made plain, the "seven seas." Only one limitation is recognized, namely, that of the eutrality law which forbids American ships to enter ertain already defined war zones. It is now reported nat the President will ask Congress to remove this estriction by modifying or repealing the neutrality aw. When this occurs, we shall be in the war indeed. ome, like Walter Lippmann, now say that this is he moment for Congress to reduce the army as a vay of telling the country and the world that ne President's promises not to send soldiers to fight n foreign soil will be kept. But it is difficult to believe nat Britain will be satisfied, or that Hitler can be rushed, or that American feeling will be content to ave the naval foot in the war while the army foot emains out.

A Decisive Step Toward War

The Book of the Month

THE CHRISTIAN CRITICISM OF LIFE. *By Lynn Harold Hough. Abingdon-Cokesbury. $2.50.*

THE dean of Drew Theological Seminary has set out to recapture a word, a great word, whose meaning has been so confused in modern culture hat its true dignity has been lost. It is the word humanism." Dr. Hough simply will not let the anti-heistic humanists (not to say atheists) run away with his word. He insists that humanism is the golden trand in all civilized thinking from ancient Greece own to the school of Irving Babbitt and Paul Elmer More in our time. Whether the modern humanist novement affords an adequate clue to the meaning of nan's intellectual history may be questioned, but there an be no doubt that the insight of Irving Babbitt did nticipate and herald the new day upon which modern neology is entering. To discuss Dr. Hough's funda-nental thesis is impossible here. It can be stated in is own words, thus: "The great fact of life on this lanet is not that there are things to be understood. t is that there has emerged in the very world where nings exist a mind which can perceive them and classify them and understand them and use them." To grasp this fact and to cling to it is to be a humanist. And Hough writes his book to show how, if one starts with man thus defined, one is led straight into the presence of God and into evangelical faith. Every page sparkles with vital words and throbs with eloquent speech. The author is a scholar and teacher who is first and always a Christian preacher. He takes high ground and leads his reader to lofty insights no less by his dealing with high things than by the urbanity and urgency of his expression.

A Thought for the Month

IN THE last analysis, modern war arises out of international injustice, the inequality of opportunity which the existing world order imposes upon the peoples of the world. "Because men do not fortify justice," said Pascal, "they justify force." That is to say, when nations find themselves in the tragic predicament which results from their unwillingness to do justice they invent a plausible justification of war. All our church resolutions declare that war is sin. But the ultimate depth of its sin lies in something we do not call war at all, namely, the refusal of the strong and privileged nations to give justice to other nations. War is the inevitable fruitage of this deeper sin. Does not this define the task of the Christian religion and the Christian church in relation to war? There is division among us on the question of the Christian's participation in war, but there can be no division as to the church's duty and the Christian's duty to labor for the regeneration of the national will so that it will put justice above national privilege. Christianity's chief business has to do with the human will. Its evangelism is directed to the creation of new men, that is, to the regeneration of their wills. Its larger evangelism must now focus upon the regeneration of nations, by creating in nations the collective will to do justice to other nations and to cooperate in fortifying justice. The slogan, "America First," can be tolerated only in the sense of its original formulation: *"Defend* America first." If it means, as I fear it is coming to mean, that America is to put herself first in isolated and exclusive preoccupation with her own national interests, disclaiming any responsibility to see that justice is established in the earth and fortified by the will to justice, it is an ignoble slogan, unworthy of our national character. The Christian church has an evangelism for such a nation. Perhaps we are entering upon a new era of evangelism whose objective will be to change the will, the soul, of the nation itself so that it will prefer justice to its own peculiar and unmerited advantages. In such an evangelism politics and economics and prophetic religion will be fused together.

The Will to Justice

Charles Clayton Morrison

Thomas S. Kepler, EDITOR

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BY *Lynn Harold Hough*

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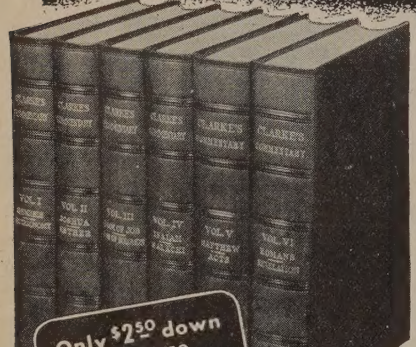

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